MABEL MARTIN
WHITTIER

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO.
TRADE
REFERENCE
LIBRARY
Please Return To:
2 Park Street, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.
Archive Collection
This book may not leave the Offices
and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

MABEL MARTIN

A HARVEST IDYL

BY

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

With Illustrations

BOSTON
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY
Late Ticknor & Fields, and Fields, Osgood, & Co.
1876

Copyright, 1875.
By JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO.

University Press: Welch, Bigelow, & Co.,
Cambridge.

NOTE.

The substance of this poem, under the name of The Witch's Daughter, was published some years ago in the volume entitled "Home Ballads." For reproducing it in its present form with some additions to its original text, the author hopes to find an excuse in the beauty of the illustrations which the change has suggested.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

ENGRAVED BY A. V. S. ANTHONY.

	ARTIST.	PAGE.
MABEL MARTIN	MARY A. HALLOCK	*Front.*
VIGNETTE	JOHN J. HARLEY	6
VIGNETTE	A. R. WAUD	13
"Across the level tableland"	T. MORAN	15
"Pass with me down the path that winds Through birches to the open land"	"	21
VIGNETTE	A. R. WAUD	27
"Thither came young men and maids"	MARY A. HALLOCK	33
"The red-ear"	T. MORAN	37
VIGNETTE	A. R. WAUD	39
"Mabel Martin sat apart"	MARY A. HALLOCK	41
"Indian Summer's airs of balm"	T. MORAN	49
VIGNETTE	A. R. WAUD	55
"Let Goody Martin rest in peace"	MARY A. HALLOCK	61
VIGNETTE	A. R. WAUD	65

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	ARTIST.	PAGE.
"Through the willow-boughs below She saw the rippled waters shine"	MARY A. HALLOCK . .	71
"The prayer, begun in faith, Grew to a low, despairing cry"	MARY A. HALLOCK . .	75
VIGNETTE	A. R. WAUD	79
"You know rough Esek Harden well" . . .	MARY A. HALLOCK . .	81
"When she smiled, Upon his knees, a little child"	" " . .	83
"O, pleasantly the harvest-moon"	T. MORAN	89
"And the wind whispered, 'It is well!'" . .	"	91

MABEL MARTIN

I CALL the old time back: I bring my lay
In tender memory of the summer day
When, where our native river lapsed away,

We dreamed it over, while the thrushes made
Songs of their own, and the great pine-trees laid
On warm noonlights the masses of their shade.

And *she* was with us, living o'er again
Her life in ours, despite of years and pain, —
The Autumn's brightness after latter rain.

Beautiful in her holy peace as one
Who stands, at evening, when the work is done,
Glorified in the setting of the sun!

Her memory makes our common landscape seem
Fairer than any of which painters dream;
Lights the brown hills and sings in every stream;

For she whose speech was always truth's pure gold
Heard, not unpleased, its simple legends told,
And loved with us the beautiful and old.

PART I

THE RIVER VALLEY

MABEL MARTIN.

Across the level tableland,
A grassy, rarely trodden way,
With thinnest skirt of birchen spray

And stunted growth of cedar, leads
To where you see the dull plain fall
Sheer off, steep-slanted, ploughed by all

The seasons' rainfalls. On its brink
The over-leaning harebells swing,
With roots half bare the pine-trees cling;

And, through the shadow looking west,
You see the wavering river flow
Along a vale, that far below

Holds to the sun, the sheltering hills,
And glimmering water-line between,
Broad fields of corn and meadows green,

And fruit-bent orchards grouped around
The low brown roofs and painted eaves,
And chimney-tops half hid in leaves.

No warmer valley hides behind
Yon wind-scourged sand-dunes, cold and bleak;
No fairer river comes to seek

The wave-sung welcome of the sea,
Or mark the northmost border line
Of sun-loved growths of nut and vine.

Here, ground-fast in their native fields,
Untempted by the city's gain,
The quiet farmer folk remain

Who bear the pleasant name of Friends,
And keep their fathers' gentle ways
And simple speech of Bible days;

In whose neat homesteads woman holds
With modest ease her equal place,
And wears upon her tranquil face

The look of one who, merging not
Her self-hood in another's will,
Is love's and duty's handmaid still.

Pass with me down the path that winds
Through birches to the open land,
Where, close upon the river strand

You mark a cellar, vine-o'errun,
Above whose wall of loosened stones
The sumach lifts its reddening cones,

And the black nightshade's berries shine,
And broad, unsightly burdocks fold
The household ruin, century-old.

Here, in the dim colonial time
Of sterner lives and gloomier faith,
A woman lived, tradition saith,

Who wrought her neighbors foul annoy,
And witched and plagued the country-side,
Till at the hangman's hand she died.

Sit with me while the westering day
Falls slantwise down the quiet vale,
And, haply, ere yon loitering sail,

That rounds the upper headland, falls
Below Deer Island's pines, or sees
Behind it Hawkswood's belt of trees

Rise black against the sinking sun,
My idyl of its days of old,
The valley's legend shall be told.

PART II

THE HUSKING

It was the pleasant harvest-time,
When cellar-bins are closely stowed,
And garrets bend beneath their load,

And the old swallow-haunted barns, —
Brown-gabled, long, and full of seams
Through which the moted sunlight streams,

And winds blow freshly in, to shake
The red plumes of the roosted cocks,
And the loose hay-mow's scented locks, —

Are filled with summer's ripened stores,
Its odorous grass and barley sheaves,
From their low scaffolds to their eaves.

On Esek Harden's oaken floor,
With many an autumn threshing worn,
Lay the heaped ears of unhusked corn.

And thither came young men and maids,
Beneath a moon that, large and low,
Lit that sweet eve of long ago.

They took their places; some by chance,
And others by a merry voice
Or sweet smile guided to their choice.

How pleasantly the rising moon,
Between the shadow of the mows,
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs!

On sturdy boyhood, sun-embrowned,
On girlhood with its solid curves
Of healthful strength and painless nerves!

And jests went round, and laughs that made
The house-dog answer with his howl,
And kept astir the barn-yard fowl;

And quaint old songs their fathers sung
In Derby dales and Yorkshire moors,
Ere Norman William trod their shores;

And tales, whose merry license shook
The fat sides of the Saxon thane,
Forgetful of the hovering Dane, —

Rude plays to Celt and Cimbri known,
The charms and riddles that beguiled
On Oxus' banks the young world's child, —

That primal picture-speech wherein
Have youth and maid the story told,
So new in each, so dateless old,

Recalling pastoral Ruth in her
Who waited, blushing and demure,
The red-ear's kiss of forfeiture.

PART III

THE WITCH'S DAUGHTER

But still the sweetest voice was mute
That river-valley ever heard
From lips of maid or throat of bird;

For Mabel Martin sat apart,
And let the hay-mow's shadow fall
Upon the loveliest face of all.

She sat apart, as one forbid,
Who knew that none would condescend
To own the Witch-wife's child a friend.

The seasons scarce had gone their round,
Since curious thousands thronged to see
Her mother at the gallows-tree;

And mocked the prison-palsied limbs
That faltered on the fatal stairs,
And wan lip trembling with its prayers!

Few questioned of the sorrowing child,
Or, when they saw the mother die,
Dreamed of the daughter's agony.

They went up to their homes that day,
As men and Christians justified:
God willed it, and the wretch had died!

Dear God and Father of us all,
Forgive our faith in cruel lies, —
Forgive the blindness that denies!

Forgive thy creature when he takes,
For the all-perfect love thou art,
Some grim creation of his heart.

Cast down our idols, overturn
Our bloody altars; let us see
Thyself in thy humanity!

Young Mabel from her mother's grave
Crept to her desolate hearth-stone,
And wrestled with her fate alone;

With love, and anger, and despair,
The phantoms of disordered sense,
The awful doubts of Providence!

O, dreary broke the winter days,
And dreary fell the winter nights
When, one by one, the neighboring lights

Went out, and human sounds grew still,
And all the phantom-peopled dark
Closed round her hearth-fire's dying spark.

And summer days were sad and long,
And sad the uncompanioned eves,
And sadder sunset-tinted leaves,

And Indian Summer's airs of balm;
She scarcely felt the soft caress,
The beauty died of loneliness!

The school-boys jeered her as they passed,
And, when she sought the house of prayer,
Her mother's curse pursued her there.

And still o'er many a neighboring door
She saw the horseshoe's curvéd charm,
To guard against her mother's harm:

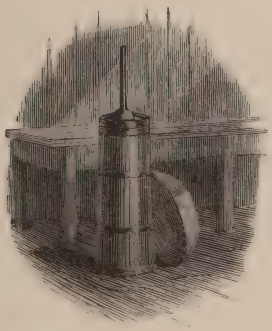
That mother, poor and sick and lame,
Who daily, by the old arm-chair,
Folded her withered hands in prayer; —

Who turned, in Salem's dreary jail,
Her worn old Bible o'er and o'er,
When her dim eyes could read no more!

Sore tried and pained, the poor girl kept
Her faith, and trusted that her way,
So dark, would somewhere meet the day.

And still her weary wheel went round
Day after day, with no relief:
Small leisure have the poor for grief.

PART IV



THE CHAMPION

So in the shadow Mabel sits;
Untouched by mirth she sees and hears,
Her smile is sadder than her tears.

But cruel eyes have found her out,
And cruel lips repeat her name,
And taunt her with her mother's shame.

She answered not with railing words,
But drew her apron o'er her face,
And, sobbing, glided from the place.

And only pausing at the door,
Her sad eyes met the troubled gaze
Of one who, in her better days,

Had been her warm and steady friend,
Ere yet her mother's doom had made
Even Esek Harden half afraid.

He felt that mute appeal of tears,
And, starting, with an angry frown,
Hushed all the wicked murmurs down.

"Good neighbors mine," he sternly said,
"This passes harmless mirth or jest;
I brook no insult to my guest.

"She is indeed her mother's child;
But God's sweet pity ministers
Unto no whiter soul than hers.

"Let Goody Martin rest in peace;
I never knew her harm a fly,
And witch or not, God knows — not I.

"I know who swore her life away;
And as God lives, I 'd not condemn
An Indian dog on word of them."

The broadest lands in all the town,
The skill to guide, the power to awe,
Were Harden's; and his word was law.

None dared withstand him to his face,
But one sly maiden spake aside:
"The little witch is evil-eyed!

"Her mother only killed a cow,
Or witched a churn or dairy-pan;
But she, forsooth, must charm a man!"

PART V

IN THE SHADOW

Poor Mabel, homeward turning, passed
The nameless terrors of the wood,
And saw, as if a ghost pursued,

Her shadow gliding in the moon;
The soft breath of the west-wind gave
A chill as from her mother's grave.

How dreary seemed the silent house!
Wide in the moonbeams' ghastly glare
Its windows had a dead man's stare!

And, like a gaunt and spectral hand,
The tremulous shadow of a birch
Reached out and touched the door's low porch.

As if to lift its latch: hard by,
A sudden warning call she heard,
The night-cry of a boding bird.

She leaned against the door; her face,
So fair, so young, so full of pain,
White in the moonlight's silver rain.

The river, on its pebbled rim,
Made music such as childhood knew;
The door-yard tree was whispered through

By voices such as childhood's ear
Had heard in moonlights long ago;
And through the willow-boughs below

She saw the rippled waters shine;
Beyond, in waves of shade and light,
The hills rolled off into the night.

She saw and heard, but over all
A sense of some transforming spell,
The shadow of her sick heart fell.

And still across the wooded space
The harvest lights of Harden shone,
And song and jest and laugh went on.

And he, so gentle, true, and strong,
Of men the bravest and the best,
Had he, too, scorned her with the rest?

She strove to drown her sense of wrong,
And, in her old and simple way,
To teach her bitter heart to pray.

Poor child! the prayer, begun in faith,
Grew to a low, despairing cry
Of utter misery: "Let me die!

"Oh! take me from the scornful eyes,
And hide me where the cruel speech
And mocking finger may not reach!

"I dare not breathe my mother's name:
A daughter's right I dare not crave
To weep above her unblest grave!

"Let me not live until my heart,
With few to pity, and with none
To love me, hardens into stone.

"O God! have mercy on thy child,
Whose faith in thee grows weak and small,
And take me ere I lose it all!"

A shadow on the moonlight fell,
And murmuring wind and wave became
A voice whose burden was her name.

PART VI

THE BETROTHAL

Had then God heard her? Had he sent
His angel down? In flesh and blood,
Before her Esek Harden stood!

He laid his hand upon her arm:
"Dear Mabel, this no more shall be;
Who scoffs at you must scoff at me.

"You know rough Esek Harden well;
And if he seems no suitor gay,
And if his hair is touched with gray,

"The maiden grown shall never find
His heart less warm than when she smiled,
Upon his knees, a little child!"

Her tears of grief were tears of joy,
As, folded in his strong embrace,
She looked in Esek Harden's face.

"O, truest friend of all!" she said,
"God bless you for your kindly thought,
And make me worthy of my lot!"

He led her forth, and, blent in one,
Beside their happy pathway ran
The shadows of the maid and man.

He led her through his dewy fields,
To where the swinging lanterns glowed,
And through the doors the huskers showed.

"Good friends and neighbors!" Esek said,
"I 'm weary of this lonely life;
In Mabel see my chosen wife!

"She greets you kindly, one and all;
The past is past, and all offence
Falls harmless from her innocence.

"Henceforth she stands no more alone;
You know what Esek Harden is; —
He brooks no wrong to him or his.

"Now let the merriest tales be told,
And let the sweetest songs be sung
That ever made the old heart young!

"For now the lost has found a home;
And a lone hearth shall brighter burn,
As all the household joys return!"

O, pleasantly the harvest-moon,
Between the shadow of the mows,
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs!

On Mabel's curls of golden hair,
On Esek's shaggy strength it fell;
And the wind whispered, "It is well!"

SEPARATE WORKS OF JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Home Ballads and Poems. $1.00.

In War-Time, and other Poems. $1.25.

The Tent on the Beach, and other Poems. $1.50.

Among the Hills, and other Poems. $1.50.

Miriam, and other Poems. $1.50.

The Pennsylvania Pilgrim. Illustrations. $1.50.

Hazel-Blossoms. $1.50.

National Lyrics. Illustrations. Paper, 50 cents.

Snow-Bound: A Winter Idyl. 16mo. $1.25.

The Same. *Vest-Pocket Edition* 10 Illustrations. 50 cents.

The Same. *Holiday Edition.* 40 Fine Illustrations. Cloth, $5.00; Morocco, $9.00.

Maud Muller. Illustrated. Cloth, $3.50; Morocco, $7.00.

Ballads of New England. 60 Beautiful Illustrations. 8vo. Cloth, $5.00; Morocco, $10.00.

Mabel Martin. Holiday volume. 58 Superb Illustrations. 8vo. Cloth, $5.00; Morocco, $10.00.

Prose Works. *Merrimack Edition.* 2 vols. 12mo. With Portrait. $5.00.

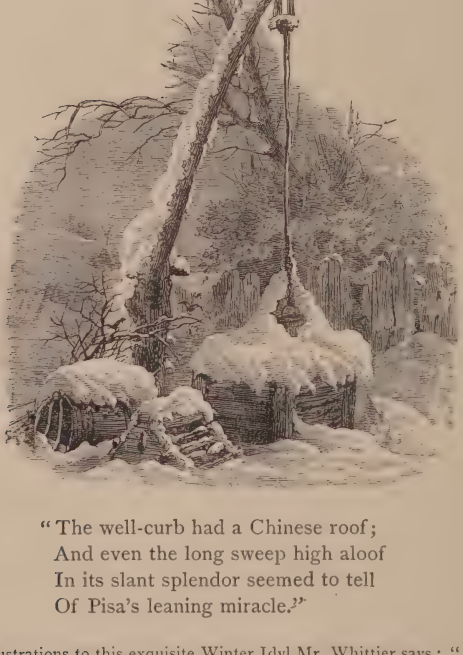
"If there are any who know Whittier only as a poet, they will find in these volumes that he is one of the purest and most charming writers of prose." — *Springfield Republican.*

JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO.,

PUBLISHERS, BOSTON.

THE ILLUSTRATED SNOW-BOUND.

WHITTIER'S SNOW-BOUND. With 40 Pictures by HARRY FENN, engraved by ANTHONY and LINTON. 1 vol. 8vo. Tinted paper, gilt edges, and bevelled boards, with ornamental cover. Price, in Morocco Cloth, $5.00; Turkey Morocco, $9.00.



"The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep high aloof
In its slant splendor seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle."

Of the illustrations to this exquisite Winter Idyl Mr. Whittier says: "It gives me pleasure to commend the illustrations which accompany this edition of 'Snow-Bound,' for the faithfulness with which they present the spirit and the details of the passages and places that the artist has designed them to accompany."

"The illustrations and the poem fit together so perfectly, forming a beautiful and harmonious whole, that one can hardly be said to have read 'Snow-Bound' unless he has read it in this edition." — *New York Times.*

MAUD MULLER ILLUSTRATED.

WHITTIER'S MAUD MULLER. With 13 Illustrations drawn by W. J. HENNESSY, and engraved by A. V. S. ANTHONY and others.

This edition of one of the most charming and popular ballads in our language is beautifully illustrated, elegantly printed on thick tinted paper, and bound in handsome morocco cloth with bevelled boards and gilt edges.

Price, 8vo, Cloth, gilt, $3.50; Morocco Antique, $7.00.

WHITTIER'S NATIONAL LYRICS.

With Illustrations by various Artists. A charming Pocket Edition of WHITTIER'S most popular patriotic poems. Bound in Morocco Cloth, with Portrait. Price, $1.00.

THE RED-LINE WHITTIER.

Illustrated with 12 full-page Pictures by various Artists.

KATHLEEN.

This first and only complete Illustrated Edition of WHITTIER ever published contains all of MR. WHITTIER'S hitherto published Poems, is handsomely printed on fine tinted paper, each page bordered with a red-ruled line, and is illustrated with 12 engravings by the best artists. It is a small quarto, uniform with the "Red-Line TENNYSON."

Price, in Cloth, $4.50; Half Calf, $6.00; Morocco, $8.00.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 10025 786 2